



Houston Middle School:

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

GENERAL INFORMATION:

• STUDENT COURSES*

6th

- Standard Math, Enriched Math, Advanced Math
- Standard Language Arts, Enriched Language Arts, APEX Language Arts
- Science
- Social Studies
- PE
- Fine Arts Elective Options: Orchestra, Band, Visual Arts, Graphic Arts, Guitar, Choir



7th

- Standard Math, Enriched Math, Advanced Math, Algebra I
- Standard Language Arts, Enriched Language Arts, APEX Language Arts
- Science
- Social Studies
- PE
- Fine Arts Elective Options: Orchestra, Band, Visual Arts, Graphic Arts, Guitar, Percussion, Choir
- Elective #2 Options: Stem, Current Events, German

8th

- Standard Math, Enriched Math, Advanced Math, Algebra I or Geometry
- Standard Language Arts, Enriched Language Arts, or APEX Language Arts
- Standard Science, Physical Science
- Social Studies
- PE
- Fine Arts Elective Options: Orchestra, Band, Visual Arts, Graphic Arts, Guitar, Percussion, Choir
- Elective #2 Options: Spanish, German, Stem, French

***These are subject to change.**



- **SOCIAL MEDIA PROVIDED BY THE PTO**

The PTO provides a variety of information that may be helpful. You may find them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/HoustonMiddlePTO, Instagram at [houstonmiddlepto678](https://www.instagram.com/houstonmiddlepto678), and Twitter at [@hms_pto_gmsd](https://twitter.com/hms_pto_gmsd). Additionally, if you have pictures or information about sports, etc that you would like shared on social media, you may email that to hmsptopublicity@gmail.com.

- **NEW STUDENT TRANSITION CAMP**

The week before school begins, students new to HMS are invited to attend a transition camp in order to become more familiar with the building and procedures.

- **OPEN HOUSE/SCHEDULE PICK UP**

The week before school begins, schedules will be available for pick up during set hours on a specified day.

- **RTI**

All students take the Case 21 Benchmark Assessment in the fall, winter, and spring for all four subject areas. Students scoring within the failing percentage in math and/or language arts then take the easy CBM Benchmark Assessment for math and/or comprehension and vocabulary. Following analysis of the easy CBM, students scoring below the 25th percentile are given additional survey level assessments to determine whether or not there is deficit. Students at the 25th percentile and below receive intervention in that area. This makes up Tiers 2 & 3 of RTI.

Tier 1 is composed of students scoring above the 25th percentile in math and language arts. Their RTI class is not elective, and students do not choose their RTI focus. A variety of classes are available for Tier 1. Some examples are... on grade level math or language arts, robotics, project based learning, stem, political science, stock market, etc. TCAP scores, Case 21 data, grades, etc are analyzed to group Tier 1 students into various classes during the RTI block. All Tiers meet during RTI time which takes place Monday through Friday in the morning.



- **MUSTANG FRIDAYS**

This activity takes place on Fridays prior to the scheduled RTI time. During this time, students will experience some character education and one on one teacher mentoring.

- **SCHOOLGY**

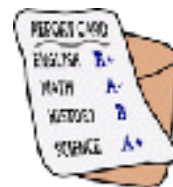
Schoology is to be the main method of communication. It allows teachers to create an online learning environment to support classroom teaching and enhance communication between teachers and students.

Middle and high school students sign into Schoology using their school-issued Office365 email and password. With a parent access code, parents may access their child's Schoology account as well. Access codes may be obtained from the student's

teacher or by emailing Chris Cooper (christopher.cooper@gmsdk12.org). An app is also available for download.

- **SKYWARD**

Skyward is the means for communicating student grades/averages. An app is available for download, and parents will receive access information from the school.



- **TECHNOLOGY**

Technology provided by GMSD is as follows:

- Grades 6-8 iPads
- Grades 9-12 laptops



- **CELL PHONES POLICY**

Students may possess personal communication devices and personal electronic devices, including cell phones, laptops, tablets, wearable technology such as eye glasses, rings, or watches that have the capability to record, live stream or interact with wireless technology, and MP3 players on school property as long as the devices are turned off and stored in backpacks, purses, or personal carry-alls.



- **CONCERNS**

Though the faculty and administration make every effort to avoid problems, parents and students will occasionally disagree with the decisions that are made in regards to discipline or grades. In most cases, problems can be resolved when parents speak to the person who is directly responsible for decisions that have been made concerning a student. The appropriate channel for help with a concern is... **contact the teacher then an administrator. 6th grade parents should contact Ms. Woody, 7th grade parents should contact Ms. Dias, and 8th grade parents should contact Mr. Ruiz.**

- **ASSESSMENTS**

An assessment calendar under Programs -Assessment can be found on the GMSD website.

- **FIELD TRIPS**

Whether an RTI class, grade level, or academic class, field trips are decided on and planned by the teacher.

- **HMS PTO NEWSLETTER**

Weekly information is provided via email by the PTO to all members who have joined the PTO.



- **HMS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

These are provided by the school and displayed on a screen in the students' homeroom. This information is also emailed weekly by the PTO to all members who have joined the PTO.

- **MORNING ROUTINE/CARPOOL LINE**

Students may enter the building at 7:30am. They will need to go directly to the gym until 7:45 am at which time they may go to their homerooms. Carpool line travels around the back parking lot continuing back around to the front of the building. Drivers should pull all the way forward before letting students out.



- **GMSD DRESS CODE**

Can be accessed at <http://www.gmsdk12.org/GMSDDressCode.aspx>

- **PE UNIFORM**

All students will be required to purchase a PE uniform. Students will need to bring the uniform and tennis shoes on days they are assigned PE.



- **LUNCH ROUTINE**

Students attend lunch with their grade level. Seats are usually assigned just at the beginning of 6th grade while the staff is reviewing cafeteria rules and expectations. Parents are allowed to eat with their children.



- **ABSENCES**

When a student is absent, please send a written note including the student's full name and dates of absence to the school on the day he/she returns. For questions, you may contact the attendance secretary, Ms. Renee Jones, at renee.jones@gmsdk12.org. A doctor's note should be obtained and submitted when checking a student in late due to an appointment.

- **LOCKERS**

All students will be assigned a locker toward the end of the first week of school and should provide a lock to secure their belongings.



- **SCHOOL SUPPLY LISTS**

These can be found on the GMSD HMS page under "Information." However, you may wish to wait to purchase items until your student attends class the first day as teachers often make specific supply requests then.



- **PTO MEETINGS**

These are usually scheduled for the 2nd Friday of each month at 9 am. Check the HMS PTO website for specific dates. Everyone is encouraged to attend! For a list of committees and other information, visit the PTO website at www.houstonmiddlepto.com.

- **DIRECTORY**

The HMS PTO will provide an online directory to those who have joined the organization.

- **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Information can be found on the HMS PTO website under "Sports and Club Contacts." Also, the HMS Announcements often contain information about clubs and activities.

- **HEALTH CLINIC & MEDICATIONS**

A clinic is located in the office area, and students may visit the nurse if they are ill or injured. Medications must be submitted by a parent with appropriate forms. See the nurse for more information.



- **SECURITY & CHECK IN PROCEDURES**

The building remains locked during school hours. Visitors must enter through the front door and be prepared to show identification at the front desk. Students may not be checked out after 2:30 pm.

- **HMS YEARBOOK**

The yearbook is prepared by the school staff, and students will be notified regarding purchasing details. You may contact Ms. Pohlman with questions: devon.Pohlman@gmsdk12.org,

- **BOOKSTORE**

There is no bookstore on campus.

AUGUST:

- **DONATION DRIVE**

When: Start of the school year

Parents are encouraged to donate any amount for the purchase of desired items that will directly reach all students.



- **CURRICULUM NIGHTS**

In August, curriculum nights allow parents to meet their child's teachers and hear about topics for their classes. This is a very important event.

SEPTEMBER:

• **JUNIOR HONORS ACADEMY APPLICATION**

When: September

Who: **8th Graders**

The purpose of the Jr. Honors Academy is to provide additional academic opportunities and field experiences for students currently excelling in the middle school setting.

Requirements:

- Current 8th grader
- Minimum of 3.75 GPA for both semesters in grades 6th and 7th for LA, Math, Science, and Social Studies
- Currently enrolled in at least one of the following – APEX
- Language Arts, Enriched Language Arts, Honors Algebra I, or Enriched Math
- Es and Ss for conduct
- No OSS for middle school



• **JUNIOR LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

When: September

Who: **8th Graders**

The purpose of the Jr. Leadership Academy is to help students develop and maintain skills so they can grow into leaders of tomorrow. Contact Jessica Woody at jessica.woody@gmsdk12.org for more information.

• **BETA CLUB APPLICATION**

When: September

Who: **7th Graders**

Requirements:

- Beta members must maintain a 3.5 GPA or higher.
- GPA's are based on ALL CORE ACADEMIC CLASSES (math, science, social studies, language arts)
- GPA's are averaged as follows: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1
- Requires five hours of service per year for 7th graders and six hours of service per year for 8th graders. Hours may be earned by working concessions at basketball games or through outside volunteer work. You may count hours for both National Junior Honor Society and Beta.
- Meetings
- When: At least one day per month at 7:35 AM
- Where: HMS cafeteria
- Must attend 4 regular meetings per year
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• NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY APPLICATION

When: September

Who: 7th Graders

Requirements:

- Applicants must have and maintain a 3.8 GPA based on all academic core subjects (math, science, social studies, language arts). Grades are averaged as follows: A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1 point
- Applicant must have and maintain a conduct grade of S or better.
- Applicant is required to complete six hours of volunteer community service. (Applicants may count hours served during the summer months prior to the school year.)
- Applicants must attend at least four meetings during the school year.
- Applicants will be required to submit, along with their application, a copy of their grades from the previous school year. (Only 7th and 8th grade students may make application to the NJHS.)

OCTOBER:

• HOUSE SYSTEM REVEAL DAY

Houses: Lipizzan, Andalusian, Percheron & Dartmoor

Reminiscent of the beloved Harry Potter books (or a British boarding school--considering your experience), Houston Middle has a "house" system for students to encourage good character and academic rigor. Everyone in the school will be divided into one of four houses, all with names and traits inspired by horses--a la the Mustang mascot. Once students are randomly placed in their houses, they will have the opportunity to earn points by demonstrating high levels of learning, performing random acts of kindness, encouraging a positive HMS culture, exemplifying good sportsmanship, and demonstrating perseverance.

Rewards for winning houses will be awarded at the end of each quarter. Also, the house with the most points at the end of the year will be awarded a house cup, as well as prestige and a place of honor for their house flag.

In addition to the House System, the school will also be instituting **MUSTANG FRIDAYS** in which they will divide up into house groups to experience some character education and one on one teacher mentoring. This will take place on Fridays during the scheduled RTI time.



- **HAUNTED HOUSTON**

When: October

Haunted Houston is a fun, family friendly event hosted by the students and parents of Houston Middle School to raise money for PTO projects that benefit every student. Events include a Haunted Hallway, a fun carnival area for all ages, bounce houses, face painting, food, music, online auction and so much more! At the middle school level, volunteers aren't needed as much so this is a great opportunity to help out your student's school.



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER:

- **BAND CONCERT**
- **WINTER FORMAL/DANCE**

When: December

Who: All grades



- **ORCHESTRA CONCERT**

- **CHOIR CONCERT**

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FEBRUARY:

- **GMSD ON THE HILL**

This interactive opportunity titled "Storm the Hill", allows students to see the inner workings of their state government. The students take part in a mock vote to learn how a bill becomes a law, and stop by for a group picture with the Tennessee governor. At the conclusion of the tour of the State Capitol, the students visit the Tennessee State Museum next door—where the Emancipation Proclamation is currently on display. Sponsored by the Tennessee Parent Teacher Association, students from across the district are chosen by their individual schools to participate in the Nashville excursion. Most students are heavily involved in the Student Government Associations. Students who attend are interested in government and familiarize themselves with legislative policy and content.



APRIL:

- **INFORMATION FOR GRADUATING 8TH GRADERS**

Students will be selecting their courses for the 9th grade school year.

Things to keep in mind...

- Standard Courses - no additional points added to averages.



- Honors Courses - all averages have 3 points added each.
- AP Courses - all averages have 5 points added each. Currently, most incoming 9th graders interested in an AP course register for AP Human Geography.
- Grading Scales (**note- advanced classes can earn higher GPA**)

For standard classes:

A = 4.0
 B = 3.0
 C = 2.0
 D = 1.0
 F = 0

For Honors classes:

A = 4.5
 B = 3.5
 C = 2.5
 D = 1.5
 F = 0

For AP classes:

A = 5.0
 B = 4.0
 C = 3.0
 D = 2.0
 F = 0

MAY:

• **ORCHESTRA CONCERT**

• **CHOIR CONCERT**

• **BAND CONCERT**

• **TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK**

When: May

The PTO plans daily activities to show appreciation for HMS teachers.



• **DAYS OF DIVERSITY**

Students that are a part of GMSD schools come from an array of places and cultures. Because of this, every year, Houston Middle School likes to take a week to celebrate this wonderful uniqueness present through a Days of Diversity festival. The hallways of Houston Middle will be decorated to correlate with a number of countries, and an eighth grade art gallery will feature students' talents alongside the cultural celebration. Students will also take time all week long to learn about the life and culture of these other places in the classroom, further enriching every aspect of the experience. The event will then culminate in the Taste of Diversity. There will be themed food tasting, arts & crafts, entertainment, an official display of the student art, and more.



• **HMS ART SHOW**

When: May

This event showcases student artwork and is in conjunction with Taste of Diversity.

• **FIELD DAY**

Held in May, these are competitions among the "houses." Parents do not attend.

- **HONOR ROLL LUNCH CELEBRATION**

When: May

Students who earned Academic or Principal Honor Roll are invited to attend a special celebration. Parents are highly encouraged to volunteer for this event.



- **8TH GRADE DANCE**

When: May

Who: 8th Graders

- **8TH GRADE PROMOTION CEREMONY**

When: Last Day of School

Who: 8th Graders

Note: Sunday dress for students



SUMMER:

- **SUMMER CAMPS**

A variety are offered including Band, Art, Basketball, & Stem. Information will be available in the HMS Announcements.

